



## INTERAGENCY CONNECTION

2320 LA BRANCH STREET, RM 1107, HOUSTON, TX

713-425-2440

*Strategic Connections resulting in Unique Solutions*

### Chair's Corner



Our Federal Executive Board is looking forward to many activities!

We are planning our **2018 Leadership FEB class** and a registration form is located on page 9 for your convenience.

Leadership FEB provides opportunities for your employees to learn and grow through:

- A variety of best practices, providing the benefit of different perspectives,
- Exposure to advances in technology to increase productivity and/or operational efficiencies. Access to a valuable network of leaders and participants with a cumulative body of knowledge and expertise comprised from each individual's perspective,
- Eighty hours of unique and professional training provided over a period of eight months, the equivalent of two full-time work-weeks of training for a nominal fee of \$500,
- Exposure to a broad range of leadership challenges and how executives are leading their agencies through those challenges,
- Refining personal and inter-personal skills focusing on leadership and group dynamics. Participants complete this opportunity with a significantly increased network of federal leaders across Houston

**Our Driving Concern:** With the approach of warmer weather, children are outdoors playing and there are increased distractions for drivers.

Traffic crashes exact a heavy toll on their victims and on businesses. According to the National Safety Council, vehicle collisions are the top cause of work-related death in the Nation. As a result, our FEB has partnered with the Texas Safety Council to host a train-the-trainer event to increase the number of federal employees that are reached by this training. We are seeking Managers, HR professionals and safety professionals and/or instructors who are willing to return to your agency and teach the "Our Driving Concern" Curriculum, in-house, multiplying the effort and benefit! A registration form is provided at page 8 of this newsletter for your convenience.

**MyFreeTaxes:** Our FEB has once again partnered with the Internal Revenue Service to provide a platform for federal employees, contract employees and all of their family members who made less than \$66,000 in 2017 to file their taxes, online, at no cost. An informational flyer is provided on page 7 of this newsletter with the URL for access to this special initiative. Those wishing to utilize this resource are not required to live in the Houston area; out of state family members can be accommodated through this resource, as well.

Tim Jeffcoat, Chair

<i>Inside Story</i>	<i>Pg</i>	<i>Inside Story</i>	<i>Pg</i>
3 Ways to Change People	2	Bill Belichick Quotes	6
TSP-Changes	3	My Free Taxes	7
Value of a Great Boss	4	Our Driving Concern	8
Cell/Passenger Difference	5	Leadership FEB	9

## THREE WAYS TO CHANGE PEOPLE

It's absurd to say we can't change people.

The people in your story have changed you.  
You're who you are, in part, because of them.

Influence is the power to produce change.

### #1. If you want to change people, change what they believe about themselves.

If people believe in you, encourage them to believe in themselves.

1. Explain the positive influence of their passion, strength, or behavior. "The influence of your (strength) on (name people) is (impact)."
2. Avoid superficial compliments.
3. Offer assessments based on character. "You're loving, kind, tenacious, or forthright."
4. Accept that doing poorly comes before excellence. "What are you learning?"

### #2. If you want to change people, tell them the truth.

Blindspots are deadly because they aren't seen.

Positive blindspots occur when people don't see their strengths, value, or contribution.

Negative blindspots are imagined strengths, value, or contribution.

Blindspots – positive or negative – limit our reach and hinder our potential.



1. Don't bring sour to the table unless you're prepared to add some sweet. *Coach when you critique.* Criticism apart from coaching is an arrogant power-play designed to put people down.
2. Immediate feedback opens eyes to blindspots. Lights come on when you catch people in the act of offending behaviors. "You're putting people on edge right now.", for example.
3. Explain their

values based on their behaviors. "This is what I see you doing. Your actions indicate xyz is important to you."

### #3. If you want to change people, explain how they're changing.

1. "I notice you've improved the way you lead meetings." (Skill)
2. "This bothered you in the past. Now you're great at it. Way to go." Explain what you mean. (Character)
3. "Your numbers are improving." (Results)

You can't change someone who refuses to change. Everyone else is fair game.

<https://leadershipfreak.blog/2018/01/26/three-ways-to-change-people/>

## TSP Participants Are Leaving Money on the Table, Fund Changes, and More

Officials at the federal government's 401(k)-style retirement savings plan said Tuesday that some employees are actually investing too much of their paychecks, and as a result they're leaving money on the table.

Geoffrey Nieboer, the Thrift Savings Plan's chief of business intelligence, told members of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, which governs the TSP, that every year, several thousand federal workers cease contributing to their accounts because they have hit their annual cap on pre-tax investments.

"There are a group of participants who are contributing a high percentage of their income and are reaching their annual contribution limit well before the end of the year," he said. "While certainly this is well intentioned, they may not understand that by stopping contributions early, they will no longer receive matching contributions and may actually be losing money."

The federal government provides an employer match for federal employees on the first 5 percent of their paycheck that they invest in the TSP. Officials said those who wish to invest more should still attempt to only hit that cap at the end of the year, so they can continue to receive the employer match.

"We message this regularly, but unfortunately for us, it's from OPM to everybody, it's that one-to-many message," Nieboer said. "Really, in order to address the few thousand people we're talking about, we need to do a personalized message. Make that phone call, send that email or that letter and say, 'You're contributing X, but you really should be contributing Y.'"



The FRTIB board also voted unanimously Tuesday to expand the portfolio of the TSP's I Fund, which is made up of international investments.

Currently, the portfolio is invested in the Morgan Stanley Capital International Europe Australasia Far

East index fund, which makes up about 59 percent of the non-U.S. investment market. But in the coming years, the I Fund will shift over to the MSCI All Country World ex U.S. IMI fund, which encompasses all the entire non-U.S. market.

Consultants with Aon Hewitt recommended the change, and estimated that increases in returns would outpace the increased volatility of expanded foreign investment. In 2017, the I Fund has posted some of the highest growth of the TSP's various investment portfolios.

Sean McCaffrey, TSP's director of investment, said plans to shift to the new index fund will be incorporated into an ongoing bid process for a vendor for the I Fund.

"We would look to implement this after the rebid for the I Fund, which is something that should be completed by September of next year," he said. "Whoever that manager is can take us through the process to move to the new index, and depending on how they feel about working over the holidays, that could start in October or in January [2019]."

Article written By [Erich Wagner](#)

<http://www.govexec.com/pay-benefits/pay-benefits-watch/2017/11/tsp-participants-are-leaving-money-table-fund-changes-and-more/144163/>

## Value of a Great Boss

I lost one of my managers a couple of years ago and I can't seem to forget him or the legacy he left behind. He was one of my earliest examples of true leadership. I often refer to him as "The Memorable Leader."

I had a family emergency and before I could finish explaining to him the situation. He said, "And you are still standing here talking to me? Why aren't you out the door yet?"

"I'll cover for you." I smiled then went to my desk, took my belongings and left. Thereafter, he had my full commitment.

### Here are five qualities of memorable leaders:

1. **Integrity & Authenticity** go hand in hand. Joseph was honest with employees even though this trait was sometimes unpopular with top management. He often took the slack for his team. If leadership is not authentic, then what is it?
2. **Humility**. True leaders always aim to serve rather than be served. Being humble makes you more approachable to your followers and allows you to create an environment of open communication and more effective feedback.
3. **Empathy** plays a critical role in one's ability to be a successful leader. It sharpens your "people acumen" and allows leaders to develop and maintain relationships with those they lead. Leaders that possess this trait always make time for people.
4. **Communication Skills** - Great leaders

are able to communicate their vision in such a way that motivates their team. They are great communicators; quick to listen and slow to speak. They possess high emotional intelligence skills.

**A truly great boss is hard to find, difficult to part with and impossible to forget.**

5. **Inspirational**- Joseph didn't need a title to get us to complete tasks. He had our full support. Words such as "Good work team," "You are

the best", "I trust your judgement" were at the top of his dictionary. Team spirit was high during his reign.

*If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader." - John Quincy Adams*

Managers are forgotten but true leaders live on in the hearts and minds of followers. Sometimes I can still picture Joseph walking through the office, greeting staff on mornings, and might even give me a little nod or pat on the back. Those were the special moments I still hold dear. It doesn't take much to create those special moments with your team.

Good bosses are few and far in between, but if and when you get one, really appreciate them.



[Brigette Hyacinth](#)

Author: The Future of Leadership: Rise of Automation, Robotics and Artificial Intelligence

Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/great-boss-hard-find-difficult-leave-impossible-forget-hyacinth/>



## Explain the Difference Between Cell Phone Call and Talking to a Passenger



In her latest vlog, Our Driving Concern Senior Program Manager Lisa Robinson recounts the story of a man who spent 20 years working on a road maintenance crew. He died a crash. He was not wearing his seat belt, and he was ejected from his vehicle.

Robinson wonders: How many of his co-workers knew he did not buckle up? She goes on to explain how a passenger in a car or truck plays just as important a role as a co-pilot in an airplane. Conversation with a passenger is safer than conversation on a cell phone – even if that phone conversation involves using a hands-free device.

When talking on a cell phone, you cannot read cues from the person on the other end of the line in the same way as you can during face-to-face conversation. So, you focus more on the conversation than usual. This distracts your mind from focusing on driving.

Also, passengers can see your driving environment. They tend to adjust conversation when risks are heightened. And they can call out those risks, too.

**Watch:** Life is Better in the Company of a Good Co-Pilot.

### *Crashes: Know the Impact*

1. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of unintentional workplace death in the United States.
2. [Every 12 minutes someone dies in a motor vehicle crash](#), every 10 seconds an injury occurs and every 5 seconds a crash occurs, according to a joint report put out by the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Occupational Health & Safety Administration. Many of these incidents occur during the workday or during the daily commute to-and-from work. Employers bear the brunt of costs for injuries that occur both on and off the job.
3. Whether you manage a fleet of vehicles, oversee a mobile sales force or simply employ commuters, by implementing a driver safety program in the workplace, you can greatly reduce the risks faced by your employees and their families while protecting your company's bottom line.
4. In Texas, the average workplace motor vehicle crash costs more than \$24,000. If the employee is injured, the cost increases to more than \$125,000.
5. Texas employers spend more than \$3 billion every year as a result of on and off the job injuries and fatalities (NHTSA).
6. Distracted driving is a contributing factor in 26% of all traffic fatalities (National Safety Council).
7. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says: [Taking Action Can Save Lives](#)

## **TOP 10 QUOTES OF FIVE TIME SUPER BOWL WINNER BILL BELICHICK**

Bill Belichick has the most wins among all active professional football coaches. Additionally, he has a record five Super Bowl wins.

Belichick is a no-nonsense leader who says what he thinks.



### **Top 10 Belichick quotes:**

#### **Power of leadership:**

#1. Good players can't overcome bad coaching.

The above quote is one of his most challenging. Team performance is leadership's responsibility. No excuses allowed.

Leaders who take 100% responsibility for the team:

1. Deal with underperformers quickly.
2. Expect team members to support each other.
3. Bring tough issues into the light.
4. Measure what matters and display it publicly.
5. Find roles where team members leverage their strengths for success.
6. Own failure and honor success.
7. Listen deeply.

#### **Face the future:**

#2. To live in the past is to die in the present.

#### **Control:**

#3. We can only control what we can control in the short-term....

#4. We don't talk about last year. We don't talk about next week. We talk about today, and we talk about the next game. That's all we can really control. The rest of it will take care of itself.

#### **Character or talent:**

#5. Talent sets the floor, character sets the ceiling.

#6. Success is not all about talent. It's about dependability, consistency, and being able to improve.

#7. The one thing I've definitely learned is you've got to count on your most dependable people... It might not be your most talented people. But you count on your most dependable people...

#8. I'm going down with that person. (Referring to the dependable person.)

#### **Serving the team:**

#9. Mental Toughness is doing the right thing for the team when it's not the best thing for you.

#10. Whatever success I've had it is because I've tried to understand the situation of the player. I think the coach's duty is to avoid complicating matters.

<https://leadershipfreak.blog/2018/02/04/top-10-quotes-of-five-time-super-bowl-winner-bill-belichick/>



The Houston FEB has partnered with IRS Stakeholder Partnerships, Education and Communication (SPEC) to make "MyFreeTaxes" available for federal employees and their families in Houston (and surrounding areas) who made less than \$66,000 in 2017 (individual or family). We also wish to extend this opportunity to contractors who work in federal space and their family members.

The MyFreeTaxes Partnership provides free state and federal tax preparation and filing assistance for qualified individuals. It's easy, safe, secure and 100% free.

***If you are asked for payment information to prepare your federal or state tax return and your income is \$66,000 or less STOP and call 855-698-9435.***

You will be able to:

Use free tax preparation and e-filing of your federal and state return. Get assistance; if you have questions, you can call a certified tax coach using the toll free number or email address provided. If unable to contact the certified tax coach immediately, you can leave a message and your call will be returned within 24 hours. Obtain knowledge and understanding about filing your return. Build confidence to file without assistance in the future.

Additional information is provided on the following link: [www.oklahoma.feb.gov/MyFreeTaxesAddtlInfo.htm](http://www.oklahoma.feb.gov/MyFreeTaxesAddtlInfo.htm)

**Earned Income Tax Credit (ever wonder what THAT was about)?** You may have extra money waiting for you with the Earned Income Tax Credit. If you or someone you know have less than \$47,955 (\$53,505 if married filing jointly) in adjusted gross income, check it out. Use the [EITC Assistant](#) and answer questions about yourself and other family members to see if you qualify and estimate the amount of your credit. EITC eligibility depends on several factors, including income and family size. If you don't have a qualifying child and earned under \$20,000, find out if you qualify for a smaller credit.

<http://www.oklahoma.feb.gov/HoustonMyFreeTaxes.htm>



## Our Driving Concern Train-the Trainer



Date:	Wednesday, April 17, 2018
Time:	8:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.
Location:	8701 S. Gessner, 12 <sup>th</sup> Floor conference room, Houston
Why?	Traffic crashes exact a heavy toll on their victims and on businesses. According to the National Safety Council, vehicle collisions are the top cause of work-related death in Texas. Injuries result in costly lost-time workers' compensation claims, and fatalities leave businesses exposed to liability and the possibility of paying multi-million dollar settlements.
Topics:	Our Driving Concern provides your managers, HR professionals and safety instructors with the resources you need to address distracted driving, drowsy driving, aggressive driving, passenger restraint, impaired driving, and other traffic safety topics in your workplace. Our Driving Concern also offers tools and resources to help you build a company-wide traffic safety program.
Who Should Attend?	Managers, HR professionals and safety professionals and/or instructors who are willing to return to your agency and teach the "Our Driving Concern" Curriculum, in-house, multiplying the effort and benefit!
Cost:	Thanks to a grant from TxDOT, this 4-hour course is provided free of charge

For CEU credit, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/CEUcreditarlington>

In Guidelines for Employers to Reduce Motor Vehicle Crashes, the Highway Safety Office says the real tragedy is crashes are largely preventable. Recognizing the opportunity that employers have to save lives, a growing number of employers have established traffic safety programs in their companies. No organization can afford to ignore a major problem that has such a serious impact on both their personnel and the agency budget.

### Registration

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail registration to:	Federal Executive Board 2320 La Branch Street, Rm 1107 Houston, TX 77004
Email to:	<a href="mailto:Gerald.Poole@gsa.gov">Gerald.Poole@gsa.gov</a>

*Cancellation Policy: Understanding that unforeseen circumstances may preclude an individual from attending, cancellations will be permitted through April 10, 2018. Since this is a "no-cost" training, we ask your courtesy to cancel early so that we can accommodate people on the waiting list, if one exists.*



## 2018 Leadership FEB Class Registration

*Return this portion to FEB*



In order to maximize the benefits and expand the cohesive networking opportunities, no alternates will be authorized to attend single sessions. However, if an identified participant becomes unable to honor their commitment to the program, the employing agency is authorized to replace that individual for the duration of the program.

Participants **must attend a minimum of five sessions** in order to receive a certificate of completion for this program.

*Forums may involve agencies with missions that require background investigations prior to the visit. If a registered employee has findings, their participation in that particular forum may be denied.*

Due to limited availability, register as early as possible to reserve a slot for your participant. It is suggested that registrations be submitted no later than March 30, 2018. Cancellations will be processed at no charge to the agency through that date. After that, we ask the agency to honor their obligation due to cost incurred; however, a substitute participant is authorized and encouraged.

*Tuition for the program is \$500.* This covers *Leadership FEB* program expenses for each forum, leadership books, parking fees for designated forums, and other materials. Personal expenses, lodging, and mileage are not included in this cost. Tuition is payable by the individual, the employer, or the sponsoring organization. Tuition paid with the application will be held until the selection process is completed. Tuition will be refunded if the applicant is not selected. *Agency/Registrant may pay the course fee (\$500) by check, credit card, or government voucher*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Dept & Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Participant's Signature* *Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Agency Director/Commander Review/Approval* *Date*

By Mail	By Email:	Questions, Call:
Federal Executive Board 2320 La Branch St., Rm 1107 Houston, TX 77004	<a href="mailto:Gerald.Poole@gsa.gov">Gerald.Poole@gsa.gov</a>	713-425-2244